

The Art of Translation: *La Jeune Indienne*

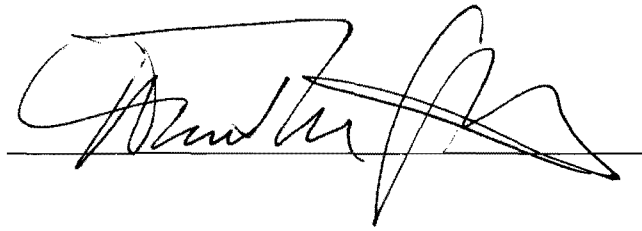
An Honors Thesis (Honors 499)

By

Jennifer L. Smith

Thesis Advisor

Dr. Dorothy Stegman

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dorothy Stegman', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with large, sweeping loops and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

May 2008

Sp. 6311
11/2/04
2-11
2-12
2-13
2-14
2-15
2-16

Table of Contents

Abstract.	3
Acknowledgements.	4
The Translation Process	5
Rough Draft Example.	7
Introduction to <i>La Jeune Indienne</i>	10
Translation of <i>La Jeune Indienne</i>	13
Conclusion.	46
Bibliography.	47

Abstract

Based on the Inkle and Yarico myth, *La Jeune Indienne* was written in 1764 by French writer Nicolas Chamfort. The comedy premiered on April 30, 1764 and quickly gained popularity on the French stage. The play was performed throughout Europe and was translated into many languages, though not English. Through my work with the play, I am able to explore the world of translation theory and learn which techniques can be used to render the best translation.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Dr. Dorothy Stegman for her unwavering support, her contagious enthusiasm and interest in all things French-related, and her helpful translation hints. Her guidance during the thesis process, as well as my entire college career, has been invaluable.

I also wish to thank Dr. Frank Felsenstein for first introducing me to the world of Chamfort. His willingness to share his vast array of knowledge was an invaluable source during this process.

The Translation Process

While studying abroad during the spring semester of 2007 at Université Lille III, I enrolled in a translation studies course. Throughout the course of the semester, I gained knowledge of translation techniques and began to consider the field of translation as a future career possibility. The professor taught us to view translation as a sort of puzzle, considering different possibilities and word combinations before deciding which one would create the best final product.

The part I find most fascinating about translation is the ability to come up with multiple versions of the same piece of work. Douglas Hofstadter's *Le ton beau de Marot: In Praise of the Music of Language* plays with this idea. Hofstadter sent a copy of a French poem to hundreds of friends and challenged them to create the best translation. Reading the many different versions that people came up with provides an interesting look into translation theory. Some translators kept their version close to a literal translation while others were more concerned with retaining the rhyme scheme, the plays on words, or the tone of the poem. A translator's area of focus can determine or alter the mood and tone of their translation. Although some were better than others, there was no "best" poem. Each version focused on a specific aspect and revealed certain characteristics of the original poem.

This ability to focus on a specific aspect of the work was something I experienced with my translation of Chamfort's *La Jeune Indienne*. Working on an English translation of the play was a wonderful opportunity that taught me a lot about translation studies. The play posed many challenges as well as different translation options to consider. I

wanted my translation to be as true to Chamfort's play as possible and, because it was written in 1764, I decided to work towards a less modern-sounding translation. In this way, I attempted to use sentence structures that sounded more befitting of an archaic poem than a 21st century English conversation.

Originally I had hoped to retain the rhyme scheme that Chamfort uses throughout the play. However, I quickly gave up on this idea, realizing that rhyming the words would require a looser translation. I felt that doing this would take away the true sense of Chamfort's 18th century French play in the English translation.

To begin, I created a very literal translation which sounded strange and stilted in English but gave me a general idea of how to proceed. Working through this first draft helped immensely in considering which word choices to use. I included synonyms and several translations of certain words, which allowed me to read through and compare. This process made it easier to consider which options captured the truest sense of the French meanings. The first rough draft was instrumental in the translation process and in allowing me to make important word and phrase choices. Though the translation itself grew and evolved throughout the process, this starting point was an invaluable part of the process. A comparison of the first and final drafts reveals the relation between the two and the journey from start to finish.

A Rough Translation

The Young Indian
A Comedy

SCENE I
BELTON, MYLFORD.

MYLFORD.

To Charlestown at last you return:
The friend to whom I call my greetings is returned.
I see you: you calm my just impatience.
But must I think of this (dismal, dreary, gloomy) welcome/reception?
I am coming/arriving: in the same moment, entering into the Port
I learned of your return; I (ran up/rushed up) with transport.
I wait with happiness to (pour out, spread) my joy
In the bosom of a friend that Heaven returns (sends back) to me;
I find you (worn out, knocked down, demoralized), penetrated by pain.
Deign to reassure me; open your heart to me.
All seems to promise you a destiny most (peaceful/tranquil).
From this place to Boston the (journey/distance) is easy:
On a father before three days you will shower with greetings. . .

BELTON.

Ah! I made his misfortune! How can I be happy?
The youth of a son is the true good of a father.
I regret my days lost in misery.
Those days so extravagant, in which the wisest work
Could render me useful to my family, to myself.
For a long time, dear Mylford, a (spirited/ardent) (drunkness/rapture),
The ardor of travel dominates my youth.
I will abandon my father and Heaven punishes me.
In a frightening storm our (vessel/ship) perishes.
I am carried dying toward a savage Isle:
An Old Man and his daughter run along the shore.
Alas, I am going to perish! Without them, without their help!
Some (care/concern), some tender care they (prerent?) of my days!
Their hunting nourishes me; their strength, their skill,
Provides for my needs & (sustains/maintains) my (foiblesse?)
Here then the mortals among us degrade!
I have passed four years in this sad country,
When this Old Man died. The (boredom/annoyance), the (anxiety, worry),
My Father, my state, my long solitude,

This hope so flattering to be useful to my turn
To those whose care has saved me the day;
All renders me (gives in... etc) then my retreat/retirement irks:
I will urge my companion to tempt fortune.
You know all. After a thousand (different, various) perils,
We smoke at the end, met on the seas,
By one of our vessels that saved our lives.
But some grief still I must suffer!
I must return to a indignant father
Against a criminal and most misfortunate son.
Can I bear/withstand his eyes in this disastrous state?
Will I poison the rest of his life?
Extravagant of his (property?) and even his days,
Can I still justly maintain his help?

MYLFORD.

Love & Friendship have a common ardor,
Of a lover, of a friend to repair fortune.

BELTON.

Love!

MYLFORD.

Do you forget that Arabelle formerly
Promised to your wishes/vows? . . . Eh! You love her, I believe!

BELTON.

Anyone without loving it can see Arabelle;
But when Mowbrai formed this union so beautiful
When this lovable object of my wishes promised,
Love, I feel it, it was not the prize.
Your uncle affirmed a sincere friendship
That joins his destiny to the destiny of my father;
But do you still believe that he wants today,
After five years past.

MYLFORD.

What! You doubt him?

You are unaware where his tenderness/sympathy for you goes:
Your misfortunes are going to hasten/hurry the effect of his promise.
Arabelle's charms grow each day;
I will read in your heart: it will be without detour.
For you, see my uncle. It is of a character
Excellent, without way/work, of a severe virtue.
The Sect that he is, cuts/slices/decides the complement/remainder;

The Quakers, as you know, are not strong (galans?)

BELTON.

Eh! For so long you believe that Arabelle. . . .

MYLFORD.

Respond to me yourself; I respond almost from her.

BELTON.

Return rather; a heart such as mine
Must, you don't doubt it, taste your upkeep/discussion/debate.
Your uncle is very dear to me; I like him: but his age
Imposes me to respect & forbids me the use
Of these outpourings of friendship so sweet/soft/mild/gentle;
My heart needs it & protects it for you.

Introduction to *La Jeune Indienne*

La Jeune Indienne, a comedy written by Nicolas Chamfort, premiered at the Comédie-Française on April 30, 1764 and quickly gained popularity on the French stage. Chamfort, who became best known for his maxims and aphorisms, wrote *La Jeune Indienne* as a statement about 18th century society. The play particularly focuses on the subjects of social status and economic state, but can also be seen as an anti-slavery piece.

La Jeune Indienne is one of many versions following the Inkle and Yarico myth which goes as follows: When Inkle, an Englishman, is shipwrecked on an isle, his companions are killed by the natives of the island. Inkle is discovered and saved by an Indian maiden named Yarico. During their months together, they fall in love and Inkle promises that when rescue comes he will return to England with Yarico and make her his wife. They manage to flag down a passing vessel which takes them onboard. However when they reach the West Indies, Inkle promptly sells Yarico into slavery. When she appeals to him and reveals that she is carrying his child, he only uses this information to raise the price.

While Chamfort's play follows the general background of the Inkle and Yarico myth, the plot's ending differs entirely from that of the original story. Rather than selling the Indian maiden into slavery, Belton – Inkle's counterpart in *La Jeune Indienne* – returns home with Betti (Chamfort's Yarico). The struggle that ensues revolves directly around the 18th century ideals of economic stability and achieving an elevated social status. While Belton loves Betti, he feels he must make choices which will keep him in an acceptable social and economic standing. For these purposes, Belton consents to a marriage previously arranged by his father and his father's best friend, the Quaker

Mowbrai. Belton's commitment to this arrangement is not a complete abandonment of Betti's love, however. He reasons that the marriage to Mowbrai's daughter Arabelle is his only means of supporting himself and Betti in a financial sense. The decision is not one made lightly; Belton goes through much consideration and anguish to eventually reach a decision that he feels is his only option. Unlike the shocking ending of the Inkle and Yarico myth, Chamfort leaves his readers with a comforting end. . . Mowbrai, after hearing the history between Belton and Betti, quickly recognizes that the strength of their bond overcomes all else. He calls for a notary and their marriage is arranged in good Quaker fashion.

Translating Chamfort's play provided many challenges. One such difficulty arose in the third scene, involving the French use of pronouns.

BELTON.

Mais, Monsieur

MOWBRAI.

Heum, Monsieur! c'est Mowbrai qu'on me nomme.

BELTON.

Pensez-vous? . . .

MOWBRAI.

Penses-tu; je ne suis qu'un seul homme,

Et non deux. Souviens-t'en & parke au singulier.

BELTON.

Tu le veux: eh bien, soit. Je vais vous tutoyer.

The French "vous" is used as a formal or plural "you" while "tu" is used to address the singular, informal "you". This difference from the English language made it

difficult to decide how to faithfully translate the exchange between Belton and Mowbrai, in order to express Mowbrai's wish to be addressed informally by his friend's son.

Other challenges arose with the usage of archaic words rarely used in modern French, such as "bassesse" and "gallans". Although they share roots or similarities to other modern words, it was necessary to give these words extra consideration and study in order to accurately translate them into English. Deciding how formal and archaic to make the English rendering was another difficulty. In the end, I decided against the idea of using "thee", "thy", and similar addresses; however, I attempted to use sentence structures and word choices that would reflect the language of the time period, rather than a modern usage. I hope to have arrived at a translation that gives readers a true sense of Chamfort's *La Jeune Indienne* of 1764.

The Young Indian

A Comedy in One Act and in Verse

Presented for the first time by
les Comédiens
François Ordinaires du Roi on April 30,
1764.

By Monsieur De Chamfort

Characters

Betti.	Mlle. Doligni.
Belton.	M. Molé.
Mowbrai.	M. Prévile.
Mylford.	M. Dubois
A Lawyer.	M. D'Auberval.
John, a Lackey.	

The scene is Charlestown, an English Colony in
18th century America.

The Young Indian
A Comedy

SCENE I
BELTON, MYLFORD.

MYLFORD.

To Charlestown at last you return:
The friend to whom I cried my greetings is returned.
I see you: you calm my just impatience.
But must I think of this gloomy reception?
I am arriving: in the same moment, entering into the Port
I learn of your return; I rush up with transport.
I wait with happiness to spread my joy
Into the bosom of a friend that Heaven returns to me;
I find you demoralized, penetrated by pain.
Deign to reassure me; open your heart to me.
All seems to promise you a destiny most at ease.
From this place to Boston the journey is easy:
Before three days you will shower a father with greetings. . .

BELTON.

Ah! I made his misfortune! How can I be happy?
The youth of a son is the true good of a father.
I regret my days lost in misery.
Those days so extravagant, in which the wisest work
Could render me useful to my family, to myself.
For a long time, dear Mylford, a spirited rapture,
The ardor of travel dominates my youth.
I will abandon my father and Heaven punishes me.
In a frightening storm our vessel perishes.
I am carried dying toward a savage Isle:
An Old Man and his daughter run along the shore.
Alas, I am going to perish! Without them, without their help!
What care, what tender care they take of my days!
Their hunting nourishes me; their strength, their skill,
Provides for my needs & sustains my weakness
Here then the mortals among us degrade!

I had passed four years in this sad country,
When this Old Man died. The boredom, the worry,
My Father, my state, my long solitude,
This hope so flattering to be useful to my turn
To those whose care has saved me the day;
All surrenders me then to my irksome retreat:
I will urge my companion to tempt fortune.
You know all. After a thousand various perils,
We are at the end, met on the seas,
By one of our vessels that saved our lives.
But some grief still I must suffer!
I must return to a father indignant
Against a criminal and most misfortunate son.
Can I bear his eyes in this disastrous state?
Will I poison the rest of his life?
Prodigal of his property and even his days,
Can I still justly maintain his help?

MYLFORD.

Love & Friendship have a common ardor,
Of a lover, of a friend to repair fortune.

BELTON.

Love!

MYLFORD.

Do you forget that Arabelle formerly was
Promised to your wishes? . . . Eh! You love her, I believe!

BELTON.

No one could see Arabelle and not love her:
But when Mowbrai formed this union so beautiful
When this lovable object of my wishes was promised,
Love, I feel it, it was not the prize.
Your uncle affirmed a sincere friendship
That joins his destiny to the destiny of my father;
But do you still believe that he wants today,
After five years past.

MYLFORD.

What! You doubt him?

You are unaware where his tenderness for you goes:
Your misfortunes are going to hasten the effect of his promise.
Arabelle's charms grow each day;
I will read his heart: it will be without detour.
For you, see my uncle. He is of an excellent
Character, without work, of a severe virtue.
The Sect of which he is, decides the remainder;
The Quakers, as you know, are not very gallant.

BELTON.

Eh! For so long you believe that Arabelle. . . .

MYLFORD.

Respond to me yourself; I respond almost from her.

BELTON.

Return rather; a heart such as mine
Must, you don't doubt it, enjoy your discussion.
Your uncle is very dear to me; I like him: but his age
Imposes me to respect & forbids me the use
Of these outpourings of friendship so sweet;
My heart needs it & protects it for you.

SCENE II

BELTON.

I see again this place! I live among men!
What fate shall I experience in the places where we are?
This Union with Arabelle formerly planned,
Becomes, in my disgrace, a necessity.
Generous Betti, your care & your courage
Save my sad days, drag me from the shipwreck.
I know happiness in the heart of your deserts,
And I find a Lover at the end of the World!
Why rob you then of this savage Climate?
Was I unfortunate? Your heart is mine to share.
Oh Heaven! I possessed, in my felicity,
This tender and sublime heart with simplicity.
Happy & satisfied in the good fortune of one another,
In a dreadful stay what destiny is ours!
There Contempt does not follow sad Poverty.
Contempt! this Tyrant of society,
This horrible scourge, this unbearable weight
With which man condemns man & is dependant upon his fellow being
Yes, Betti, I feel it, I would have braved for you
The evil that your love supported for me.
But I cannot overcome the inconceivable horror . . .
My weakness to Betti will seem pardonnable,
When she knows our customs, our habits,
My deplorable state & our common misfortunes.

SCENE III

MOWBRAI, BELTON.

BELTON *treats him with profound reverence.*

MOWBRAI.

Leave your greetings, my dear. Cover your head.
To be a little more frank be a little less honest.
I already told you that & tell it again.
Love me; you must; but leave your hat.
My friend, your errors and your insane youth,
To your unfortunate father hastened old age.
This father makes for me the best of friends.
I find you again finally, I will return to him his son.

BELTON.

But, Sir

MOWBRAI.

Humph, Sir! Mowbrai is my name.

BELTON.

Sir, you think

MOWBRAI.

Mowbrai; I am only a man,
Remember & speak to me informally.

BELTON.

You want that: ah fine, it will be. I will speak plainly.
My father is indulgent; but my overly long absence
Has perhaps since tried his patience.
After all the grieving that I was able to give him,
Do you think so? Can he still forgive me?

MOWBRAI.

You do not know that which is the paternal spirit.
Once a child returns to settle down under our wing
We no longer examine whether he is guilty or not;
And the confession of the error is pardoned in an instant.

But after this I consent to tell you
If in the future still an imprudent delirium
Led you astray, turned you away from the road to Duty,
If such a confession you dared to boast about,
I will scorn you without return: but I think
That after 5 entire years of errors and imprudence,
The unfortunate son of a generous friend
Since addressing himself to me wants to be virtuous;
And to put me in the right to ease your misery.

(Here Belton trembles)

Your misery! yes, see a little the beautiful affair!
Watch as he is confused, humiliated
For this word of misery. . . . Oh Heaven! What a pity!
Your Father's uncommon friendship toward me,
Lastly again saved my fortune.
I lose two ships near the Port before my eyes:
They believe in me without resort. An ardent creditor,
In order to reassure his timid avarice,
Wants me to fix a term & and to go in Justice,
By an oath guilty as much as solemn,
To dishonor for him the name of the Eternal.
To the All-Powerful Being to do such an insult!
I went to comply, bankruptcy was certain,
When I suddenly received this note. Read.

BELTON takes the note and reads.

"Sir,

MOWBRAI

Ah! Without a doubt.

BELTON continues.

"I just learned of the misfortune

"That put you outside the state to be able to face up

"To some arrangement. I ask you gracefully

"To accept on my part fifty million crowns,

"That I have at just at the right time newly received.

"Ignore please, the perpetrator of this service.

"If fortune one day returns you favorable,

"I will reclaim it. Save this note:

"It is your receipt & I am satisfied."

MOWBRAI *takes back the note.*

Of this concern, your Father alone appears to me capable.
It is in effect to him that I am indebted. . . .
It is not forbidden here for you, astounded one.
My son, never be surprised at virtue.
There you are now in a state to understand,
What sensible interest to both I must take?
But don't wait for me for protests,
For outbursts of friendship, for exclamations;
I am all united, myself; be then of the family:
From this day my nephew presents you to my daughter.

BELTON.

Your your daughter!

MOWBRAI.

Eh! Yes. You seem astonished?
Be at ease, hear it, do not be embarrassed.

BELTON.

For a long time in favor of a faithful friendship,
Your mouth promised Arabelle to my love.
I aspired to these nuptials & this flattering hope,
Precious to my Father, was dear to my heart.
But I gave myself in to justice & I have too many places to fear
That my long errors may not, perhaps, put out
This hope which formerly my heart was flattered.
I feel that this union between us divides,
Is the only way to make myself useful to my father,
And to offer myself to him worthy again to please him.

MOWBRAI.

Go on; my heart is again what it formerly was.
I cherish your misfortune, it gives credence to your rights.
Yes, so many bad sufferings, fruits of your imprudence,
Must have given you twenty years of experience.
Belton, one must leave to put to profit blows;
To forget one's misfortunes, it is the biggest of all.
Goodbye. . . . Good! make your bow, goodbye;

(aside.)

He enrages me with his elegance.
For three entire years that we have it here,
He doesn't train himself: he is always polite!

(aloud.)

Frankness, my dear; that is politeness.
The woods would have had to give you this kind.

(He wants to leave & retraces his steps.)

By the way; I forgot. . . . Who is this child
That all my family surrounds in admiring?
In savage clothes, with long hair,
I come from briefly seeing her. The likable Creature!

BELTON.

It is she whose care & happy labor
Protected my days, led me from the waters.
She was with me when your Captain,
Seeing us fighting alone against a certain death,
Lashed suddenly toward us, & took us on board.

MOWBRAI.

Ah! That which you tell me interests me to her fate.
She has sacred rights on your gratitude;
But I leave you. Goodbye: there is that which advances.

(He leaves.)

BELTON *alone.*

Alas! Can I to my heart never conceal
That it is the only way to pay her kindness.

SCENE IV

BETTI, BELTON.

BETTI.

Ah! I find you at last? They besieged me without end.
Why is it that around me everyone is attentive?
They ask me at the same time five or six questions;
I listen; the best I can; to all I respond:
They laugh with excess! Must I believe it,
Belton? To laugh here marks always joy? . . .

BELTON.

You gave them pleasure. . . .

BETTI.

Oh! good, so it is in this way
So much the better: but you, hence don't you laugh also?
They believed you to be angry.

BELTON.

I have good reason to be.

BETTI.

What reason, tell me? Can I not know it?
You seem worried. . . .

BELTON.

I am . . . Not for me.

BETTI.

For whom then, my friend?

BELTON.

Will I say it? For you.
I believe that in these places your kind will not be pitied.

BETTI.

You love me, that is enough: may I have that to believe?

BELTON.

No, it is not enough. One must have, to be happy,
Some things more . . .

BETTI.

What is necessary in these places?

BELTON.

Wealth.

BETTI.

You continually educate me to speak:
But you did not tell me what wealth was.

BELTON.

Eh! perhaps to do without

BETTI.

You speak of love.
People do not love each other then in this sad place.

BELTON.

They love each other: but often love lets one know
Of more pressing needs.

BETTI.

Eh! What can they be?

BELTON.

Love without other goods. . . .

BETTI.

Love without gaiety
hardly can suffice with felicity:
But in your country, as well as in ours,
Can one not conserve both at the same time?

BELTON.

To truly enjoy the gifts of both, one must
Be rich. . . .

BETTI.

Eh! tell me: am I rich? Belton?

BELTON.

You? No; you do not have gold.

BETTI.

What! this sterile metal

That I saw! . . .

BELTON.

Exactly.

BETTI.

It is not useful to you

You do not serve yourself any for more than four years.

But in this country you know the people well;

They will give you all if it is so necessary:

They would never want to let their Brother suffer.

BELTON.

Listen to me, Betti: you are no longer in your woods.

The Men in these places are submissive to Laws.

Need brings them together & unites them.

These conflicting Mortals that interest brings together

Would want not to see allowed, in society,

Those which work has well merited.

BETTI.

But . . . all this seems to me to be reasonable.

BELTON *aside*.

Each instant to my eyes deems her more estimable.

Aloud.

Betti . . . Poverty . . . inspires in me a just fear.

BETTI.

Poverty! . . . But . . . it is to lack everything, I believe?

BELTON.

Yes.

BETTI.

I always knew it & yourself & my Father.
What! we could lack necessities here?

BELTON.

No: but it is not necessary to limit all our cares there.
We are besieged by different needs.
They are born each day: each instant brings them back;
And when by chance inhumane Fortune
Did not give us. . . .

BETTI.

I do not understand you . . .
To lack clothing, shelter, nourishment,
This is poverty: I do not believe in another at all.

BELTON.

That is yours, alas! know what is yours!

BETTI.

Another poverty! you have two then?
One must be quite unfortunate in this country!

BELTON.

It is little to content the needs of life:
A prevention among us establishes
Makes it, by misfortune, a necessity
Of things of agreement & commodity,
Of which your astonished eyes admired the usage;
And of eternal needs a fatal assembly.

BETTI.

Ah! this poverty . . . it is your fault also.
Why then invent this again?
In our world, thanks to our care, the inexhaustible Earth
Was of all our needs the unfailing source.
Belton, how made, & how are still

All those that among you possess more gold?

BELTON.

Some hold it by chance, & others by a Father,
Of crime too often it becomes the reward:
But Virtue sometimes has produced. . . .

BETTI.

What are you saying?

Here with gold you pay Virtue!

BELTON.

Against the need of gold the infallible remedies. . . .

BETTI.

Eh! well! . . .

BELTON.

It is useful to whomever possesses it;
For he whom sells his heart, whom creeps under the Laws.

BETTI.

Oh! Heaven! I would like much better to return to our woods.
What! whoever has gold, obliges another to do
What he judges appropriate, all that can please him?

BELTON.

Often.

BETTI.

You leave it to dishonest people?

BELTON.

More than others.

BETTI.

Gold in the hands of the wicked!
But you do not think at all there & this is not wise:
Won't they be able to make a dangerous usage?
You must tremble to all, if gold can dare all.

Of you & of your days, they can arrange.
The arrow that in the air searched for your nourishment
Was between my hands, less terrible & less certain.

BELTON.

Each following his heart sets differently.
Of Virtues or of Vice he becomes the instrument.
With greed these strengthen it,
Hide it in secret & return it to the earth. . .

BETTI.

Ah! Let's flee these people. You just told me
Of a happier country where we can go.
This country where the people want to be useful
To their society. If the earth is fertile,
They have too much of it: we will ask for it:
And as it is to all, suddenly we will obtain it.

BELTON.

They will never give it. The most fertile fields
Only suffice as punishment to the Inhabitants of the Cities. . . .

BETTI.

Too bad; because I would have worked hard.

BELTON.

In these places

One saves for your Sex an odious work.

BETTI.

It is that your women are languishing, stupid;
I already saw two of them entirely motionless.
But for me work is always pleasing;
In our fields, since childhood, it exercises my arms.

BELTON.

You don't want to work during the stay where we are;
Custom defends it.

BETTI.
It is permitted by the men?

BELTON.
Without a doubt it is permitted.

BETTI *with joy*.
Belton, kiss me.

BELTON.
What! so?

BETTI.
You will give back to me what I do for you.

BELTON.
Ah! It is too much to prolong such a severe agony.
See the cause & the excess of my worry.
Go, Betti; I already regret your country;
Here by these works we are degraded.
See to what fate, alas! We must expect!
Of needs reborn the horror is going to catch us unawares.
Deprived of support, of needs, abandoned by all
The frightening eye of Contempt will attach onto you.
We will dare yet to take these useful cares
That love ennobled, that here one believes to be servile.
We will have to devour, beg for disdain;
Rebutted, condemned at the insult of being pitied.
All will embitter our pains, even our tenderness.
We will hate love; we will fear old age;
In reproducing unfortunate others some day,
Our hands will reject the fruits of our love.

BETTI.
Heaven!

SCENE V

BETTI, BELTON, MYLFORD.

MYLFORD *to Belton.*

I left Arabelle, & I am going to instruct you. . . .

BETTI *to Mylford.*

Do you love Belton?

MYLFORD.

Yes.

BETTI.

Good! he just told me

That he does not have gold at all . . .

BELTON *to Mylford.*

Oh Heaven! Will you dare to think!

MYLFORD.

By a vain fear to offend me.

You know my heart, my sentiments, my zeal;

I know the happy necessity of a faithful friendship;

All my goodness is to you.

BELTON *softly to Betti.*

To what you reduce me!

BETTI *to Belton.*

But he offers you his gold; you only receive it?

(to Mylford.)

We will not take all.

BELTON *to Mylford.*

Bear that I instruct her.

(to Betti.)

He wrongs himself for me: his heart disguises it from him.

He offers me all his possessions: I must refuse it,

Or his friendship will be abused.

This offer where sometimes a friend resigns himself,
When one dares to accept it, one becomes indignant.

BETTI.

What! one rejects the gifts of friendship?

BELTON.

Often who receives it excites pity.

BETTI.

I do not hear you at all. So in your country honor
Does not present any sense, it is then a frivolous noise?
Cries in our forests spoke more clearly,
Than this vain language that your heart denies.
What! you want gifts to be able to be a task?
That on whom receives them some dishonor attaches itself?
That the hand of a friend? No, you go too far:
I am sure of this. Never am I mistaken about you.

MYLFORD.

Belton, you hear the voice of Nature.
It takes revenge on me, friend; you have done me injury.

(to Betti.)

I would like to speak to him, Betti; withdraw.

BETTI.

Why then? You are not able to speak to him in front of me?
Is it some secret that you must conceal from me?

(to Belton whom she regards tenderly.)

When I confided something in you, did I dismiss my father?
You want it!

BELTON *nods to her.*

BETTI.

Go on then!

(Betti gives a sigh & regards Belton for several moments.)

SCENE VI

BELTON, MYLFORD.

MYLFORD.

Finally all is finished.

I am sure of Arabelle, & her heart is known.
Her response for you is most favorable,
“These nuptials, she said, seem desirable
“My heart since six months ago is promised to Belton.
“My eyes saw Belton, & this heart submitted itself.
“I deplored his death, Heaven brings him back to us
“My Father commanded, I obey with joy.”
But of this grieving air that I must finally think?
Friendship must know . . .

BELTON.

Ah! it is too much to be offended by it.

Know my state. The young Misfortunate,
Companion of my evils, in these places . . .
Man is made to love. I possessed her heart:
In a barbarous climate she made my happiness.
No, I am unable to betray her faithful tenderness.
She did everything for me.

MYLFORD.

You did everything for her,

It is sweet to me to find my generous friend;
But my first desire is to see you happy.
Of marriage to Arabelle observe the advantage;
Observe that already you reach this age,
Where for a certain state, your choice decree
May give you a station in society.
For you by this union fortune is fixed;
And the trace of all your misfortunes is erased.

BELTON.

I feel it: your reasons penetrate my spirit.
Without pain I admit them; but my heart destroys them.
Who me? To betray Betti! To render her unfortunate!

I am unable to bear the painful image.
Alas! if you knew everything that I must!
But who can know it? . . . It is she; I see it.
The remorse in her eyes shakes me & devours me.

SCENE VII

BETTI, BELTON, MYLFORD.

BETTI *to Belton*.

You have some secret to hide from me again?
Alas! yes. . . . Far from me you turn your eyes.
Ah! I want to force this odious secret from you.
But who comes to trouble you?

MYLFORD *to Belton*.

It is my uncle himself.

BETTI.

What a country! One cannot enjoy here that which one loves.

MYLFORD.

Farwell: you decide; you only have an instant.
Consider your state, to the price that you wait,
To five unfortunate years, to you, to your father,
And take a part that I believe necessary.

BETTI *to Belton showing him Mowbrai*.

It's not necessary to leave again for this?
Me, I like this old man; I am staying.

SCENE VIII

BETTI, BELTON, MOWBRAI.

MOWBRAI.

Here you are!

I was looking for you. I bring happy news.

I have for you the promise & the vow of Arabelle.

The contract is all ready.

BELTON.

Such a favor. . . .

As much as it is in you can make my happiness.

BETTI *to Mowbrai with naiveté.*

Much obliged. . . .

MOWBRAI.

Betti, you will serve my daughter;

And I want you always to look after my family.

BETTI.

Oh! for me I only want to serve my friend.

MOWBRAI *to Belton.*

How much you must love her! I feel myself moved:

In forming these gentle vows, paternal friendship

Believes to assure also Arabelle's happiness;

And by equality this marriage matched

To my daughter.

BETTI.

Belton, what does he say to you here

Of his daughter, & what does it mean? . . .

MOWBRAI *to Belton.*

Eh! deign to respond to her.

BELTON *aside.*

God! what a frightening moment! I feel astounded!

MOWBRAI.

Her friendship merits better treatment;
And with her you must use it otherwise.
Eh! when she knows that an approaching marriage
Of my daughter to your kind will join destiny;
She takes quite a part. . . .

BETTI.

Good old man, what are you saying?

MOWBRAI *to Belton.*

But from where comes this worried passionate look?
(*to Betti.*)
Starting today my daughter. . . .

BELTON *aside.*

He is going to pierce her soul.

MOWBRAI.

By eternal vows she is going to become his wife.

BETTI *to Belton.*

His daughter! your wife! Is it really true, cruelty!
Will you have formed this criminal project?
What! you will be able to betray the most tender Lover!
O misfortune! o forfeit! I am unable to understand! . . .
But I no longer believe you: you told me a thousand times
That here against crime one has a recourse of the Laws;
I dare to implore them; you force me there, perfidious one.
Respectable Old Man, be my judge & my guide;
That your voice implores them with me today.

MOWBRAI.

(*aside.*)

(*to Betti.*)

What am I going to do? Oh heaven! . . . I will be your support.
But my child; these Laws your love reclaims,
In vain. . . .

BETTI.

What! by your Laws he can betray my flame!
He would be able to forget. . . . God! what frightening climates!
In what country, oh Heaven! did you drive my steps?
Drag me away from places, evidence of my insult,
Whom of a dear Lover makes a perjured Lover;
Atrocious stay, asylum of misfortune,
Where one has other needs than those of the heart;
Where kindness betrays, where love insults. . . .
What is the proof of fidelity here?
What support. . . .

MOWBRAI.
Of certain guaranteed evidence of honor. . . .

BETTI *quickly*.
Oh! I have some. . . .

MOWBRAI.
What are they?

BETTI.
Me, Heaven, and his heart.

MOWBRAI.
If by an august and solemn promise. . . .

BETTI.
He promised me a hundred times the most faithful love.

MOWBRAI.
He has in writing?

BETTI.
Oh Heaven! What did I hear?
What! you want to ask in writing? You dare it?
In writing! Yes I have some . . . The horrors of being shipwrecked,
My cares in a Climate that you will call Savage,
The dangers that for you I ran a thousand times;
There are my titles. Come, since they are unrecognized,
In the heart of the forest, Barbarian comes to read them?

Everywhere at each step the love knew to write them,
At the summit of Rochers, in our desert lairs,
On the edge of the shore & within the seas.
He owes me all. It is little to have saved your life
That a tiger or that hunger would have ravished you a hundred times.
My work, my perils saved you each day.
Between my Father & sharing with him my love.
My Father! . . . Ah! I hear him at his last hour,
At the moment where our hands closed his eyelids,
To tell us; My children, love each other always.
I hear you respond to him: Yes, I promise you that.
Turning toward the Quaker.
You are moved. . . .

BELTON *aside*.
Oh Heaven! what pitiable man
Could. . . .

MOWBRAI.
You would be capable of betrayal?

BETTI *to Belton*.
That you left me in the heart of the forests?
I could there without witnesses moan of your heinous crimes.
In my dark room, in my deep cave,
Would I know if he was of the misfortunes of the world?
Ah! how much I feel it, when you no longer love me!
Eh well! since never our bonds are broken. . . .
Help me get out of these places. That at least in my misery
My tears may flow on the tomb of a Father.
You, Cruel, live here among the unfortunate.
They all resemble you, if they bear you in their homes.

BELTON *turning tenderly*.
Betti!

BETTI.
You gave me this name that I hate,
This name that reminds me of a fatal memory,
This name that makes alas! my misfortune today:

In former times it was dear to me; it came to me from him.
To this name that he loved, in the past his tenderness
Deigned join his, pronounced it without stopping;
Made a happiness to unite both of them.
Pronounced by my mouth, they revived his fires:
His frightening change for never to separate them.

MOWBRAI *aside.*

My heart is oppressed! . . .

(*to Belton.*)

What! You would be able Barbarian. . . .

BELTON.

I am it in effect for having resisted
To this love so tender and too little merited.
Ah! believe it the vows of my moved soul!

(*to Betti.*)

The poverty & the evils where I exposed your life
Only to abandon you were to force my heart;
Even in betraying you, I wanted your happiness.
Should misery & outrage a hundred times in your arms
Overwhelm me, crush me, I thank God for my share!
I defy these needs that could alarm me;
I no longer know of them but one: it is this to love you.
I lost you! Oh Heaven! That I am going to be pitied.

He throws himself at her feet.

Would you want to pardon.

BETTI.

Ah, you never have to fear,

Cruel! You know it too much: this heart that knew you
It can. . . .

BELTON.

Dear Betti, what heart I would have lost!

(*they embrace.*)

MOWBRAI.

Oh touching spectacle! Loving & pure tenderness!
Love brings in my bosom the cry of Nature.

Give yourself up without reserve to transports so gentle;
I feel them & my heart shares them with you.

(to Belton.)

(to Betti.)

You are villainous a moment: And you, how you are dear to me!

(he goes toward the door.)

John, John.

SCENE IX

BETTI, MOWBRAI, BELTON, JOHN.

MOWBRAI.

Listen.

JOHN.

What!

MOWBRAI.

Make the Notary come.

(John exits.)

Belton, give grace to Heaven to have saved you
This heart so generous, by yourself experienced;
And that your soul one day can equal hers.

BETTI.

Equal, dear Belton, your tenderness to mine.
Existing in your heart, rich with your love,
Mine can be happy, even in this place.

(to Mowbrai.)

Cease to condemn him by a cruel reproach:
He loves me.

MOWBRAI.

Someone is coming: it is the Notary.

SCENE X

BETTI, BELTON, MOWBRAI, THE NOTARY.

MOWBRAI.

Approach.

THE NOTARY.

Servant.

MOWBRAI.

Be seated . . . It is for these two spouses.

BETTI *to Belton*.

Who is this man? . . .

BELTON.

This man comes for us.

THE NOTARY *to Mowbrai*.

You are mistaken, I believe, I do not come for her;
And I am certain this contract takes the name of Arabelle.

MOWBRAI.

Erase this name for me; put there Betti's.

THE NOTARY.

Betti!

MOWBRAI.

Quickly, hurry . . .

THE NOTARY.

Go on; be . . . I have finished.

BELTON.

Let us sign.

THE NOTARY.

It is well said, but before the signature
It is necessary to put at least the dowry of the Future.

MOWBRAI.

Go on, put: her virtues.

THE NOTARY *drops his pen.*
Well! you mock I believe.

MOWBRAI.

Her virtues.

THE NOTARY.
Go on then; you are mocking me.
Who never would have seen? . . .

MOWBRAI *with impatience.*
Put her virtues, I am telling you.

THE NOTARY.
All goodness! by my faith, this is something of a miracle!
You are not adding more?

MOWBRAI.
Is it nothing above?
Add, if you want; fifty thousand ecus.

THE NOTARY.
Fifty thousand ecus if you want! The accessory
Is well worth the principle, as far as I may believe.

BELTON *to Betti.*
He showers us in goodness! Ah! let us run into his arms . . .

BETTI.
Ah! Throughout, good Old Man, do not scorn us.

MOWBRAI.
What is she saying?

BETTI.

Ah! I know that in your country one scorns. . .

MOWBRAI.

Other foolishness!

Where does she take this? Will it be you, Belton,
Who wants to warn her of this illusion?
To be ashamed of kindnesses your soul has weakness?
Since with misfortune you confuse lowliness,
I must reassure you. I give you nothing.
The amount is to your Father & I return to you your property,

THE NOTARY *to Belton.*

Sign.

BELTON *signs.*

THE NOTARY (*to Betti.*)

To you.

BETTI.

Who? me! I do not know how to write at all.

BELTON.

Give me your hand, love is going to drive it.

BETTI.

And heart & hand, Belton all is to you.

BELTON.

Your heart in loving, only yields it to me.

BETTI.

Eh! well! it is finished then? That is what this means?

BELTON.

To the happiness of both you just subscribed;
You assure me the object that had known to charm me.

BETTI.

What! without this servant I would not have been able to love you?

(to the Notary.)

Give me this writing.

THE NOTARY.

It is not necessary.

This writing must always stay at the Notary's place.

Besides that would make you. . . .

BETTI.

I would make one!

If he stopped loving me, I would show it to him.

THE NOTARY.

Pest! the beautiful secret found there, Madame!

BELTON.

In doubting my flame you afflict my soul.

MOWBRAI.

By the most Sacred vows I come to unite you.

Your Father would have done it; I must inform him.

He will approve all:

(in showing Betti.)

And there is your excuse.

Let us instruct my friend that his sadness abuses.

In embracing you himself, he will want to forget all:

To console his old days, it is to justify you.

THE END.

Conclusion

Chamfort's use of the Inkle and Yarico myth could be seen as a piece taking stance against slavery. His play, with its ending differing from that of the myth, also makes a statement about social class and economic status in the 18th century. Betti symbolizes the freedom and lack of these social necessities while Belton represents the struggle to satisfy society's demands. Happily, Chamfort leaves readers with a pleasant and comforting end as love wins out over the economic and social burdens of society.

Translating *La Jeune Indienne* provided a great study into the world of translation theory and techniques. I found that a literal translation helped me in the beginning before rearranging sentence structure and reevaluating word choices. A translator may use many different ways of translating, generally preferring to focus on specific aspects. The decision to concentrate on a modern version, an historical translation, the rhyme scheme, or the tone of the piece can completely change the outcome of the work. These choices may also affect whether the translator wants to keep the translation as close to the original as possible or whether it is necessary to take certain artistic liberties. It is not a matter of correctness, but of preference.

The translation of Chamfort's play went through many phases. It began as a rough literal translation, was attempted with a focus paid to rhyme scheme, and then developed into the final version it is today. In this translation, specific choices were made in an attempt to best reflect the sense and meaning of Chamfort's *La Jeune Indienne*.

Bibliography

- Arnaud, Claude, Deke Dusinberre, and Joseph Epstein. Chamfort: A Biography. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Chinard, Gilbert. La Jeune Indienne, Comédie en un acte et en vers. by Nicolas Chamfort. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1945.
- Felsenstein, Frank. English Trader, Indian Maid: Representing Gender, Race, and Slavery in the New World. Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1999.
- Hofstadter, Douglas R. Le Ton beau de Marot: In Praise of the Music of Language. New York: HarperCollins Publishers Inc, 1997.
- Price, Lawrence Marsden. Inkle and Yarico Album. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1937.